I absolutely support this petition and request that the FCC move away from it's
past standards for testing and embrase a more technical testing procedure for
Amateur Radio testing. I have witnessed, as a VE, the technically inept
applicants who pass the written elements by memorization. I'm amazed at the
low-level of skills of new Extra class Amateurs who do not know the basics of
equipment, antenna, grounding, etc. operation. I realize we all have to start
somewhere, but there is a real jump between book memorization and practical
experience. I really don't see our hobby being perpetuated or developed with
mere "appliance operators." In regards to the code requirements I highly
recomend that the code be retained for General and Extra class licenses. The
artform of Morse Code is not a necessity for HF operation, but is very important
to the dedication and commitment to this hobby. Just as with any other form,
the roots and beginnings are very important. Our hobby began with Morse Code
and AM modes. There were no digital or SSB modes - just these two modes. These
modes have been built-up, over the years, and today, we have a vast selection of
modes and techniques to choose from. Keeping with most hobbies, the history and
preservation of early forms is VERY IMPORTANT! This means the preservation and
USE of Morse Code. The General and Extra class licenses should reflect and
support our heritage and early forms. This doesn't mean that one is committed
to using these forms, exclusively, but he or she should be familiar with these
forms and should be able to have a basic or intermediate knowledge of these
forms. Also, in regards to my early statements, I believe that the commitment
to learn the Morse Code is evident of someone who is more than an "appliance
operator." If you wish to attain higher license levels, then you should be able
to demonstrate more experience and capabilities in this hobby - technical and
historical (Morse Code). I again request that the FCC maintain the Morse Code
requirements for General and Extra classes and also change the testing procedurs
as detailed in this proceding. Thank-you for your attention!